



**OUR LADY OF THE LAKE**  
**— UNIVERSITY —**

**TEXAS SCHOOL COUNSELING  
CERTIFICATION GUIDE**

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## SCOPE OF GUIDE:

*This guide serves as a supplemental document to the primary handbook for the OLLU MAC Program. This guide provides additional information and guidance specific to school counselor certification; It does not replace or supersede information and policies within the MAC Program Handbook. It is the students' responsibility to review all program handbooks and manuals to ensure compliance with all state, university, degree, and departmental policies.*

### **SEE ALSO – UNIVERISTY & PROGRAM POLICIES:**

- A. [MAC Program Handbook](#)
- B. [MAC Program Clinical Manual](#)
- C. [OLLU Graduate Catalog Policies](#)
- D. [OLLU Student Handbook](#)



Hello!

Welcome to the Our Lady of the Lake University's MA in Counseling – School Counseling Program! We're thrilled to have you with us as you embark on your journey to become a certified school counselor in Texas. Congratulations on reaching this stage in your professional journey.

As OLLU's School Counseling Program Director, I'm excited to be a part of your educational journey here. Our exceptional faculty will support you in your courses and help you cultivate your passion for making a difference in the lives of students. Although the school counseling program is challenging, I am confident you will emerge as a well-prepared and qualified professional school counselor. We aim to push your boundaries and encourage you to think critically throughout your program experiences. I urge you to engage in reflective practice and strive for continuous improvement, as it will undoubtedly be worthwhile.

I wish you success throughout the school counseling program. Please use this manual as a guide to supplement the MAC Program Handbook for all counseling students at OLLU. School counseling specific policies and requirements are included here to guide you through your specialization specific training and pursuit of Texas certification in school counseling. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us for assistance.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Melissa Brennan'.

Melissa Brennan, PhD, LPC-S, CSC

School Counseling Program Director, Our Lady of the Lake University

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## SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM CONTACTS

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# STEPS TO BECOMING A TEXAS CERTIFIED SCHOOL COUNSELOR

## Texas School Counselor Certificate Requirements: (Located under TEA Student Services Certificates)

1. Complete an approved Educator Preparation Program (*OLLU Master of Arts in School Counseling*).
2. Hold a master's degree from an institution of higher education that is accredited by an accrediting agency, as recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (outside source). *This requirement will be met once your degree is conferred by the university.*
3. Have two years of classroom teaching experience in a public or accredited private school.\*
  - Students admitted to the program prior to September 1, 2023 are required to have 2 years of teaching experience according to [TAC Code 239.20](#).
  - Students admitted to the program after September 1, 2023 are not required to have 2 years of teaching experience according to [Senate Bill \(SB\) 798](#).
4. Complete the required test (*TE<sub>x</sub>ES Certification Exam School Counselor 252*)\*
  - \*Before being allowed to take the official certification exam you must demonstrate readiness (TAC §230.21) with a score of 240 or better on the practice exam (program policy).
5. Apply for certification via your TEAL/ECOS account: <https://tealprod.tea.state.tx.us/> and pay the required fee.
  - If you need assistance with this, contact the Certification Officer (Ms. Castillo) at [mycastillo@ollusa.edu](mailto:mycastillo@ollusa.edu) and she will send you a pdf with instructions on how to do so.

## Steps to Demonstrate Readiness for the TE<sub>x</sub>ES Certification Exam:

1. Reserve a testing spot for the approved Saturday testing dates with Certification Officer, Ms. Castillo, at [mycastillo@ollusa.edu](mailto:mycastillo@ollusa.edu)
2. Receive verification of testing reservation from the Certification Officer, Ms. Castillo, via Email OR you can request the promo code from the Certification Officer to purchase Certify Teacher and take the practice exam online 24/7.
3. Candidates MUST score 240 or better on the practice exam.
  - a. If taking the paper version of the exam the Certification Officer, Ms. Castillo, will score your practice exam and provide an analysis within 1 week.
  - b. If taking the online Certify Teacher practice exam scores are immediate.
  - c. If you demonstrate readiness with a score of 240 or better the Certification Officer, Ms. Castillo, will release you on ECOS to sign up for the official TE<sub>x</sub>ES School Counselor exam via the Pearson website: [https://www.tx.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML\\_FRAG/TX252\\_TestPage.html](https://www.tx.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML_FRAG/TX252_TestPage.html)
4. If you did not demonstrate readiness you will need to repeat steps # 1-3

**IMPORTANT:** The TE<sub>x</sub>ES School Counselor exam (252) is a CAT Test and is now offered year-round. To check appointment availability see the following Pearson link:

[https://www.tx.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML\\_FRAG/TX252\\_TestPage.html](https://www.tx.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML_FRAG/TX252_TestPage.html)

# OLLU SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM CURRICULUM

The OLLU school counseling program curriculum aligns with the requirements for certification as a Professional School Counselor in Texas, as well as the standards for CACREP program accreditation.

- [239.15 TEA Standards Required for the School Counselor Certificate](#)
- [CACREP Foundational Counseling Curriculum Standards](#)
- [CACREP School Counseling Curriculum Standards](#)

## §239.15 TEA School Counselor Certification Standards

(a) School Counselor Certificate Standards. The knowledge and skills identified in this section must be used by an educator preparation program in the development of curricula and coursework and by the State Board for Educator Certification as the basis for developing the examination required to obtain the School Counselor Certificate. The standards also serve as the foundation for the professional growth plan and continuing professional education activities required by §239.25 of this title (relating to Requirements to Renew the Standard School Counselor Certificate).

(b) Standard I. Learner-Centered Knowledge: The certified school counselor has a broad knowledge base. The certified school counselor must know and understand:

1. the history and philosophy of counseling;
2. counseling and consultation theories and practices;
3. career development theories and practices;
4. the roles and responsibilities of a comprehensive school counseling program that emphasizes college and career readiness and postsecondary options for all students, including college admissions, college financial aid resources, application procedures, and workforce and career opportunities;
5. assessment principles and procedures, including the appropriate use of tests, test interpretation, and test results;
6. changing societal trends, including demographic, economic, and technological tendencies, and their relevance to school counseling;
7. environmental, social, and cultural factors that affect learners' development and the relevance of those factors to educational, career, personal, and social development, along with comprehensive school counseling programs;
8. learners' developmental characteristics and needs and their relevance to educational and career choices;
9. legal and ethical standards, practices, and issues and the importance of commitment to and implementation of ethical principles;
10. the characteristics and educational needs of special populations;
11. techniques and behavioral interventions to assist teachers with classroom management;
12. the integration of a school counseling program, the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards, and academic curricula;
13. the roles and responsibilities of a comprehensive school counseling program that is responsive to all students;
14. counseling-related research techniques and practices;
15. developing and teaching best practices on leadership skills;
16. how cultural factors and group membership impact individual students;
17. the comprehensive school counseling program model;
18. how to utilize various forms of technology and how inappropriate use could be professionally and personally harmful; and
19. an understanding of systems, including family dynamics and school environments.

(c) Standard II. Learner-Centered Skills: The certified school counselor applies the knowledge base to promote the educational, personal, social, and career development of the learner as outlined in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*. The certified school counselor must:

1. develop processes and procedures for planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*;

2. provide a proactive, comprehensive, developmental school counseling program based on the needs of students, as set forth in *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs*;
3. counsel individuals and small groups using appropriate counseling theories and techniques in response to students' needs;
4. consult with parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and other individuals as appropriate to enhance his or her work with students;
5. coordinate resources, referrals, and follow-up procedures for students within the school and community;
6. demonstrate proficiency in teaching small and large groups by actively engaging students in the learning process;
7. participate in the selection, use, and interpretation of assessments and assessment results;
8. use multiple sets of information and data to make decisions about students, programs, and services;
9. use counseling-related research techniques and evidence-based practices to address student needs;
10. advocate for a comprehensive school counseling program that is responsive to all students;
11. facilitate learners' ability to achieve their potential by helping them set and attain challenging educational, career, personal, and social goals based on various types of information;
12. maintain proficiency in counseling and campus-related technology; and
13. use varied sources of information, resources, and practices to counsel students about postsecondary opportunities and college and career readiness.

(d) Standard III. Learner-Centered Process: The certified school counselor participates in the development, monitoring, revision, and evaluation of a campus based on *The Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs* that promotes learners' knowledge, skills, motivation, and personal growth. The certified school counselor must:

1. collaborate with others in the school and community to implement a guidance curriculum that promotes learners' development in all domains, including cognitive, social, and emotional areas;
2. facilitate learners' ability to achieve their potential by helping them set and attain challenging educational, career, personal, and social goals based on various types of information;
3. use both preventive and intervening strategies to address the concerns of learners and to help them clarify problems and situations, set goals, explore options, and implement change;
4. implement effective referral procedures to facilitate the use of special programs and services;
5. act as a consultant to help learners achieve success inside and outside of school;
6. advocate for a comprehensive school counseling program and recognize the required time commitment to fully apply the program implementation cycle;
7. create a program mission, goal, and services in alignment with the school mission and campus improvement plan;
8. create and disseminate literature or newsletters to all stakeholders that describe the comprehensive school counseling program and reduce negative stigmas associated with receiving counseling services in a school-based program;
9. establish an advisory council or board with membership of all stakeholders (student, parent, teacher, administrator, community member, other personnel, and support specialists);
10. increase public relations and awareness through community outreach, such as fundraising, grant writing, donations, volunteerism, local businesses, and use of public or guest speakers;
11. provide school-wide professional development and parent workshops throughout the school year;
12. support participation in fair-share responsibilities versus non-counseling related duties;
13. know district, state, and federal initiatives that are to be reflected in a comprehensive school counseling program; and
14. develop practices to promote learners' knowledge about college and career readiness processes necessary to pursue postsecondary opportunities.

(e) Standard IV. Learner-Centered Equity and Excellence for All Learners: The certified school counselor promotes academic success for all learners by acknowledging, respecting, and responding to diversity while building on similarities that bond all people. The certified school counselor must:

1. understand learner differences, including those related to cultural background, gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic levels, academic ability, and learning styles, and know ways to create and maintain a positive school environment that is responsive to all learners;

2. advocate for a school environment in which diversity is acknowledged and respected, resulting in positive interactions across all cultures, genders, ethnicities, and learning styles;
3. facilitate learning and achievement for all students to ensure services that cover an array of exceptionalities, including special populations, by promoting a cooperative, inclusive, purposeful learning environment;
4. take a positive, strength-based approach that builds on commonalities versus differences in all learners;
5. understand how environment and behavior may impact or influence individual learners;
6. ensure equitable access to programs and services for all students;
7. understand how family values, group membership, and culture intersect;
8. acknowledge learners' gifts, strengths, and extracurricular talents when considering programs and services;
9. increase students' awareness and include their voices regarding educational and individualized plans; and
10. ensure equitable access and exposure to postsecondary opportunities and college and career readiness information and resources for students and parents/guardians.

(f) Standard V. Learner-Centered Communications: The certified school counselor, an advocate for all students and the school, demonstrates effective professional and interpersonal communication skills. The certified school counselor must:

1. demonstrate effective communication through oral, written, and nonverbal expression;
2. use knowledge of group dynamics and productive group interaction;
3. support responsive interventions by effectively communicating with parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and community members;
4. facilitate learners' access to community resources;
5. develop and implement strategies for effective internal and external communications;
6. facilitate parent/guardian involvement in their children's education;
7. develop partnerships with parents/guardians, businesses, and other groups in the community to facilitate learning;
8. work effectively as a team member to promote positive change for individuals, groups, and the school community;
9. take a positive, strength-based approach that verbalizes commonalities versus differences in all learners;
10. effectively communicate his or her role and responsibility and counselor identity to all stakeholders to reduce confusion about the duties of a school counselor;
11. adhere to best practices connected to ethical and legal considerations around appropriate use of technology and email, documentation, record keeping, privileged communication, and informed consent process;
12. facilitate access to and use of school and community information and resources related to postsecondary opportunities and college and career readiness by learners, parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and community members.

(g) Standard VI. Learner-Centered Professional Development: The certified school counselor continues professional development, demonstrating a commitment to learn, to improve the profession, and to model professional ethics and personal integrity. The certified school counselor must:

1. use reflection, self-assessment, and interactions with colleagues to promote personal professional development;
2. use counseling-related research techniques and practices as well as technology and other resources to facilitate continued professional growth;
3. strive toward the highest level of professionalism by adhering to and modeling professional, ethical, and legal standards;
4. apply research-based practice to improve the school guidance and counseling program;
5. engage in ongoing professional development to improve the school guidance and counseling program;
6. engage in continued professional development experiences to learn and apply concepts, skills, and practices related to increasing college and career readiness and promoting postsecondary opportunities and preparation for all learners.

## **CACREP Section 3: Foundational Counseling Curriculum Standards**

### **A. PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING ORIENTATION AND ETHICAL PRACTICE**

1. history and philosophy of the counseling profession and its specialized practice areas
2. the multiple professional roles and functions of counselors across specialized practice areas



3. counselors' roles, responsibilities, and relationships as members of specialized practice and interprofessional teams, including (a) collaboration and consultation, (b) community outreach, and (c) emergency response management
4. the role and process of the professional counselor advocating on behalf of and with individuals receiving counseling services to address systemic, institutional, architectural, attitudinal, disability, and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success
5. the role and process of the professional counselor advocating on behalf of the profession
6. professional counseling organizations, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, and current issues
7. professional counseling credentialing across service delivery modalities, including certification, licensure, and accreditation practices and standards for all specialized practice areas
8. legislation, regulatory processes, and government/public policy relevant to and impact on service delivery of professional counseling across service delivery modalities and specialized practice areas
9. current labor market information and occupational outlook relevant to opportunities for practice within the counseling profession
10. ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling across service delivery modalities and specialized practice areas
11. self-care, self-awareness, and self-evaluation strategies for ethical and effective practice
12. the purpose of and roles within counseling supervision in the profession

## **B. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES AND EXPERIENCES**

1. theories and models of multicultural counseling, social justice, and advocacy
2. the influence of heritage, cultural identities, attitudes, values, beliefs, understandings, within-group differences, and acculturative experiences on individuals' worldviews
3. the influence of heritage, cultural identities, attitudes, values, beliefs, understandings, within-group differences, and acculturative experiences on help-seeking and coping behaviors
4. the effects of historical events, multigenerational trauma, and current issues on diverse cultural groups in the U.S. and globally
5. the effects of stereotypes, overt and covert discrimination, racism, power, oppression, privilege, marginalization, microaggressions, and violence on counselors and clients
6. the effects of various socio-cultural influences, including public policies, social movements, and cultural values, on mental and physical health and wellness
7. disproportional effects of poverty, income disparities, and health disparities toward people with marginalized identities
8. principles of independence, inclusion, choice and self-empowerment, and access to services within and outside the counseling relationship
9. strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination
10. guidelines developed by professional counseling organizations related to social justice, advocacy, and working with individuals with diverse cultural identities
11. the role of religion and spirituality in clients' and counselors' psychological functioning

## **C. LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT**

1. theories of individual and family development across the lifespan
2. theories of cultural identity development
3. theories of learning
4. theories of personality and psychological development
5. theories and neurobiological etiology of addictions
6. structures for affective relationships, bonds, couples, marriages, and families
7. models of resilience, optimal development, and wellness in individuals and families across the lifespan
8. models of psychosocial adjustment and adaptation to illness and disability
9. the role of sexual development and sexuality related to overall wellness

10. biological, neurological, and physiological factors that affect lifespan development, functioning, behavior, resilience, and overall wellness
11. systemic, cultural, and environmental factors that affect lifespan development, functioning, behavior, resilience, and overall wellness
12. the influence of mental and physical health conditions on coping, resilience, and overall wellness for individuals and families across the lifespan
13. effects of crises, disasters, stress, grief, and trauma across the lifespan

#### **D. CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

1. theories and models of career development, counseling, and decision-making
2. approaches for conceptualizing the interrelationships among and between work, socioeconomic standing, wellness, disability, trauma, relationships, and other life roles and factors
3. processes for identifying and using career, avocational, educational, occupational, and labor market information resources, technology, and information systems
4. approaches for assessing the conditions of the work environment on clients' life experiences
5. strategies for assessing abilities, interests, values, personality, and other factors that contribute to career development
6. career development program planning, organization, implementation, administration, and evaluation
7. developmentally responsive strategies for empowering individuals to engage in culturally sustaining career and educational development and employment opportunities
8. strategies for advocating for employment support for individuals facing barriers in the workplace
9. strategies for facilitating client skill development for career, educational, and life-work planning and management
10. career and postsecondary training readiness and educational decision-making
11. strategies for improving access to educational and occupational opportunities for people from marginalized groups
12. ethical and legal issues relevant to career development and career counseling

#### **E. COUNSELING PRACTICE AND RELATIONSHIPS**

1. theories and models of counseling, including relevance to clients from diverse cultural backgrounds
2. critical thinking and reasoning strategies for clinical judgment in the counseling process
3. case conceptualization skills using a variety of models and approaches
4. consultation models and strategies
5. application of technology related to counseling
6. ethical and legal issues relevant to establishing and maintaining counseling relationships across service delivery modalities
7. culturally sustaining and responsive strategies for establishing and maintaining counseling relationships across service delivery modalities
8. counselor characteristics, behaviors, and strategies that facilitate effective counseling relationships
9. interviewing, attending, and listening skills in the counseling process
10. counseling strategies and techniques used to facilitate the client change process
11. strategies for adapting and accommodating the counseling process to client culture, context, abilities, and preferences
12. goal consensus and collaborative decision-making in the counseling process
13. developmentally relevant and culturally sustaining counseling treatment or intervention plans
14. development of measurable outcomes for clients
15. evidence-based counseling strategies and techniques for prevention and intervention
16. record-keeping and documentation skills
17. principles and strategies of caseload management and the referral process to promote independence, optimal wellness, empowerment, and engagement with community resources
18. classification, effects, and indications of commonly prescribed psychopharmacological medications
19. suicide prevention and response models and strategies
20. crisis intervention, trauma-informed, community-based, and disaster mental health strategies
21. processes for developing a personal model of counseling grounded in theory and research

## **F. GROUP COUNSELING AND GROUP WORK**

1. theoretical foundations of group counseling and group work
2. dynamics associated with group process and development
3. therapeutic factors of group work and how they contribute to group effectiveness
4. characteristics and functions of effective group leaders
5. approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members
6. application of technology related to group counseling and group work
7. types of groups, settings, and other considerations that affect conducting groups
8. culturally sustaining and developmentally responsive strategies for designing and facilitating groups
9. ethical and legal considerations relative to the delivery of group counseling and group work across service delivery modalities
10. direct experiences in which counseling students participate as group members in a small group activity, approved by the program, for a minimum of 10 clock hours over the course of one academic term

## **G. ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC PROCESSES**

1. historical perspectives concerning the nature and meaning of assessment and testing in counseling
2. basic concepts of standardized and non-standardized testing, norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessments, and group and individual assessments
3. statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations
4. reliability and validity in the use of assessments
5. culturally sustaining and developmental considerations for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessments, including individual accommodations and environmental modifications
6. ethical and legal considerations for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessments
7. use of culturally sustaining and developmentally appropriate assessments for diagnostic and intervention planning purposes
8. use of assessments in academic/educational, career, personal, and social development
9. use of environmental assessments and systematic behavioral observations
10. use of structured interviewing, symptom checklists, and personality and psychological testing
11. diagnostic processes, including differential diagnosis and the use of current diagnostic classification systems
12. procedures to identify substance use, addictions, and co-occurring conditions
13. procedures for assessing and responding to risk of aggression or danger to others, self-inflicted harm, and suicide
14. procedures for assessing clients' experience of trauma
15. procedures for identifying and reporting signs of abuse and neglect
16. procedures to identify client characteristics, protective factors, risk factors, and warning signs of mental health and behavioral disorders
17. procedures for using assessment results for referral and consultation

## **H. RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EVALUATION**

1. the importance of research in advancing the counseling profession, including the use of research to inform counseling practice
2. identification and evaluation of the evidence base for counseling theories, interventions, and practices
3. qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research designs
4. practice-based and action research methods
5. statistical tests used in conducting research and program evaluation
6. analysis and use of data in research
7. use of research methods and procedures to evaluate counseling interventions
8. program evaluation designs and procedures, including needs assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments to inform decision-making and advocacy
9. culturally sustaining and developmentally relevant outcome measures for counseling services
10. ethical and legal considerations relevant to conducting, interpreting, and reporting the results of research and program evaluation

11. culturally sustaining and developmentally responsive strategies for conducting, interpreting, and reporting the results of research and program evaluation

## **CACREP Section 5H: School Counseling Curriculum Standards**

1. models of school counseling programs
2. models of PK-12 comprehensive career development
3. models of school-based collaboration and consultation
4. development of school counseling program mission statements and objectives
5. design and evaluation of school counseling curriculum, lesson plan development, diverse classroom management strategies, and differentiated instructional strategies
6. school counselor roles as leaders, advocates, and systems change agents in PK-12 schools
7. qualities and styles of effective leadership in schools
8. advocacy for comprehensive school counseling programs and associated school counselor roles
9. school counselor roles and responsibilities in relation to the school crisis and management plans
10. school counselor consultation with families, PK-12 and postsecondary school personnel, community agencies, and other referral sources
11. skills to critically examine the connections of social, cultural, familial, emotional, and behavioral factors to academic achievement
12. skills to screen PK-12 students for characteristics, risk factors, and warning signs of mental health and behavioral disorders
13. strategies for implementing and coordinating school-based interventions
14. techniques of social-emotional and trauma-informed counseling in school settings
15. evidence-based and culturally sustaining interventions to promote academic development
16. approaches to increase promotion and graduation rates
17. interventions to promote postsecondary and career readiness
18. strategies to facilitate school and postsecondary transitions
19. strategies to promote equity in student achievement and access to postsecondary education opportunities

# OLLU SCHOOL COUNSELING FIELD EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) certifies school counselors as K-12 school counselors. Students must complete a 100-clock hour practicum, supervised by a qualified supervisor at an approved site. Following practicum, students must complete two 300-clock hour internships supervised by a certified school counselor in a school setting. School counseling students are required to successfully complete a total of 700 hours (1 practicum and 2 internship courses) to meet OLLU program requirements. In addition, school counseling students are required to meet the following requirements for hours and supervision:

## Hours Requirements

***Practicum*** - Accrue a minimum of 100 total clock hours at site.

- 40 clock hours must be direct service with actual clients/students.
- 4 direct hours must be facilitating/co-facilitating group counseling sessions.

***Internship*** - Accrue a minimum of 300 total clock hours at site.

- 120 clock hours must be direct service with actual clients/students.
- 4 direct hours must be facilitating/co-facilitating group counseling sessions.

## Supervision Requirements

### ***Site Supervision***

All students must have a qualified approved site supervisor to oversee their practicum and internship hours. Students will meet with the site supervisor in person for one clock hour per week to discuss direct service and other professional activities.

### ***University Supervision***

All students must participate in weekly online university supervision sessions (internship class meetings). Students are allowed **ONE** absence during university supervision per semester. If students miss more than one class, they may not pass the course.

### ***Field Supervision***

Students are required to demonstrate skills in two live field supervision sessions per semester observed by an approved field supervisor. The field supervisor will conduct pre and post observation conferences, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement in the post session feedback.

The requirements described above are minimum requirements for practicum and internship. OLLU faculty instructors may have additional requirements for their course. Please consult your course syllabus for specific course requirements.

# TEA REQUIRED INSTRUCTION FOR TEXAS SCHOOL COUNSELOR CERTIFICATION

## Mandatory Training Modules For TEA Certification (School Counselor)

### TEA Learn Dyslexia

<https://register.tealearn.com/browse/tea/dyslexia/courses/tea-dyslexia-24-25>

All certification candidates must receive instruction in the detection and education of students with dyslexia as required in the Texas Education Code (see [TEC §21.044\(b\)](#)) and the Texas Administrative Code [reference [19 TAC §228.57\(c\)\(2\)](#)]. The TEALearn dyslexia course meets these requirements. Additional information about the course can be found [here](#).

*Note: Texas students will be prompted to complete this training in COUN 6323 Professional School Counseling Services: Implementation and Evaluation. The training is included as an ungraded assignment required for all students seeking certification in Texas.*

**Format:** Online

**Cost:** Free

**Time:** 3-6 Hour Self-Paced Course



### Instructions:

1. To access TEA Learn’s dyslexia course, visit the link above or go to TEA Learn and type ‘dyslexia’ in the search bar. Then select the course, TEA Dyslexia.
2. Click on the blue “Enroll” box and fill out the necessary registration information, including your TEA ID number.
3. For “District/Charter” check the box for “I don’t have one,” for “Campus” check the box for “I don’t have one,” for “Current Assignment/Role” choose “Certification Program Candidate.”
4. Click the blue “register” box at the bottom.
5. Complete all the modules & take the quiz at the end of the modules (if provided).
6. You will be sent an email when you have completed the training with a link where you can receive your certificate. Click View Certificate, download your certificate, and submit it to Ms. Castillo (mycastillo@ollusa.edu) **and** to the COUN 6323 assignment link in Blackboard.

### Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/population-focused-modules/youth/>

Youth Mental Health First Aid is an 5-hour training course that trains participants to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The training includes: risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems; information on depression, anxiety, trauma, psychosis, and addiction disorders; a 5-step action plan to help someone developing a mental health problem or in crisis; and where to turn for help – professional, peer, and self-help resources. MHFA teaches about recovery and resiliency – the belief that individuals experiencing these challenges can and do get better and use their strengths to stay well.

*Note: Youth Mental Health First Aid Certification is a required assignment in COUN 8355 Child & Adolescent Counseling. Students must sign up for and complete this training on their own by following the instructions below. Students may complete this training requirement prior to COUN 8355 if desired.*

**Format:** Synchronous/Virtual

**Cost:** FREE trainings available

**Time:** 5 - 8 Hour Course



**Instructions:** To register for YMHFA training, visit the following link and select a course that works with your schedule. You are welcome to take an in-person or hybrid course, however most students select the virtual course option.

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/take-a-course/find-a-course/>

*Note: the cost of YMHFA training varies. There are many free courses available, however you must click on the 'Register' button next to a course to view the course details, including cost. Be sure to double check the course type, course cost, and course dates prior to completing registration.*

## **TEA Certification Training Requirements Addressed In Curriculum (School Counselor)**

### **Texas Educators' Code of Ethics & Appropriate Relationships, Boundaries & Communication**

The following instructional materials are included in each school counseling specialization course:

- [TEA Educators' Code of Ethics](#)
- [TEA Educators' Ethics Training](#)

### **Texas Educator Skills & Responsibilities; Framework for Teacher/Principal Evaluation**

The Texas evaluation standards and framework for school counselors, teachers, and principals are included in the instruction materials in COUN 6323 Professional School Counseling Services: Implementation & Evaluation (week 13 module). The module focuses on school counselor standards; instructional materials include an overview of TEMPSC-III, T-TESS, and T-PESS.

### **Classroom Management Skills**

Classroom management skills are addressed within the following school counseling courses/assignments:

- COUN 6351 (Week 7 Module) - Students participate in a discussion assignment focused on classroom lessons and discuss classroom management strategies.
- COUN 6323 (Week 4 Module) - Students create a unit of guidance curriculum lesson plans and address classroom management strategies.

### **Digital Literacy Evaluation & Instruction**

Digital literacy skills are addressed within the following school counseling courses/assignments:

- COUN 6323 (Week 4 Module) - Students create a unit of lesson plans and incorporate technology elements into their lessons. Students review [ISTE standards](#) to guide their incorporation of technology use in lessons.
- COUN 6351 (Week 13 Module) - Students complete digital literacy assessments on 'Information Literacy' and 'Supporting K-12 Distance Learning' to demonstrate proficiency in these areas. If students do not pass one or both of the assessments, they must review provided resources before re-attempting the assessments.

## **DISCLAIMER**

OLLU reserves the right to change degree requirements, certification requirements, assessment requirements, and/or implementation timelines. Changes may occur in rules, standards, testing, certification, or other areas of educator preparation because of legislative, State Board for Educator Certification, or Texas Education Agency (TEA) action through no fault of OLLU but must be adhered to.

Notifications of any revisions to the school counseling program will be communicated to students via (1) campus publications such as the graduate catalog, (2) MAC Program Handbook, (3) Blackboard courses and/or OLLU email, and (4) OLLU website <http://www.ollusa.edu/>.

# BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENTS

Per [Texas Education Code §22.0835](#), each school district will complete a criminal background check on all candidates placed in their schools prior to participation in any field experiences. School districts usually request a social security number and/or driver's license number for all candidates to process background checks according to their procedures. Students are responsible for submitting all the required background check information in the form requested. School districts may deny placements to students with a criminal background. Please reference the Criminal Background Check/Criminal History Policy Form.

## CRIMINAL HISTORY POLICY

### **Criminal Background Check and Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation**

All applicants/candidates seeking certification in Texas must read and sign this form acknowledging [TAC 227.1\(b\)](#) Educator preparation programs (EPPs) shall inform all applicants that: (1) pursuant to the Texas Education Code (TEC), [§22.083](#), candidates must undergo a criminal history background check before employment as an educator; and (2) pursuant to the [TEC, §22.0835](#), candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to field experiences.

OLLU's Texas certification/educator preparation program requires that applicants and candidates have a clear criminal history background check (nationwide) before admittance into the educator preparation program or a favorable Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation letter from TEA about their potential eligibility for educator certification. Applicants with certain criminal convictions or deferred adjudications may not be eligible for placement and, thus, unable to pursue certification. For more information, candidates may review the Texas Occupation Code, Chapter 53, Section 53.001-53.105, or the [Texas Administration Code Chp. 249, Subchapter B §249.16](#).

Applicants and/or candidates of the OLLU educator preparation program should be aware of the following: Having a criminal history might prevent applicants from attaining a placement and/or completing their field experience or becoming certified educators based on the following factors:

- the nature and seriousness of the crime;
- the relationship of the crime to the purposes that certification is required to become a professional educator;
- the extent to which certification might offer an opportunity to engage in further criminal activity of the same type as that in which the person previously had been involved;
- the relationship of the crime to the ability, capacity, or fitness required to perform the duties of a professional educator;
- the extent of the applicant's past criminal activity;
- the age of the person when the crime was committed;
- the amount of time that has elapsed since the person's last criminal activity;
- the conduct and work activity of the person before and after the criminal activity;
- if the person has completed the terms of their probation or deferred adjudication;
- the evidence of rehabilitation; and
- other evidence, including letters of recommendation.

Applicants may request a **Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation (PCHE)** before admission into the educator preparation program:

- TEA will provide an evaluation for a non-refundable online fee of \$50



- The evaluation will give TEA’s written opinion about the individual’s eligibility for certification and is based on the individual's self-reported criminal history
- The evaluation is voluntary and non-binding
- You may request a Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation (PCHE) only if:
- You are enrolled or planning to enroll in an educator preparation program or you are planning to take a certification exam for initial educator certification, and
- You have reason to believe that you may be ineligible for educator certification due to a conviction or deferred adjudication for a felony or misdemeanor offense.

### Steps to Request a Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation (PCHE)

Effective October 1, 2018, requests for a PCHE must be submitted online.

1. Read all [FAQs](#) to ensure you meet the preliminary criminal history evaluation criteria. **Do not submit a PCHE request or make payment if you do not meet the criteria.**
2. Gather the following information, which TEA will require to complete your evaluation. To prevent delay in the agency’s response, be prepared to submit all documentation with your request:
  - All offenses that you believe may make you ineligible for teaching certification,
  - Your statement about the circumstances upon which your arrest(s) were based,
  - All court documentation showing the formal disposition of each offense and related charges. To obtain such documentation, contact the clerk in the jurisdiction (typically a County) where you were arrested.
3. [Provide payment through Texas Online](#). Retain the Local Reference Number, which is your payment confirmation that will be included in your request. Please be aware that the fee is non-refundable.
4. Complete the online [Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation](#) request form. Upon submission, you will receive a confirmation email with a copy of the information you entered.

Once the request and documentation are received, TEA staff will evaluate your criminal history. Within 90 calendar days, staff will email you an evaluation letter that provides you with the agency’s opinion about your potential eligibility for educator certification. The evaluation will be based on the information you provided as part of your request. Should you need to submit additional information during the review, you can respond to your request confirmation email or fax 512-936-8247.

### Note to Applicants/Candidates

If, during the program of study, a person becomes ineligible for placement because of a certain criminal conviction, he/she may have to withdraw from the course and/or program of study and may not be able to complete their course, certification, and/or degree requirements. In addition, if a candidate is convicted of certain offenses upon successful completion of an educational program, they may become ineligible for certification/certification examination. Please refer to Texas Occupation Code, Chapter 53, Section 53.001-53.105 and/or [Texas Administrative Code Chp. 249, Subchapter B §249.16](#) for further clarification of offenses leading to ineligibility of certification.

## EXIT POLICY FOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Texas requires all educator preparation programs to have an exit policy for candidates' dismissal. The policy must be published, reviewed, and signed by candidates when admitted to the program. ([19 TAC §228.31\(b\)](#)).

### ***Dismissal from the Educator Preparation Program***

This dismissal policy applies to all Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU) certification candidates from admission to their selected program to graduation. Certification candidates may be dismissed from Our Lady of the Lake University's Educator Preparation Program (EPP) if their behavior fails to meet the professional and ethical standards expected of Texas educators. Dismissal may occur for various reasons, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Failure to meet coursework requirements.
2. Failure to abide by the MAC Program Fitness-to-Practice policies established by Our Lady of the Lake University and/or program requirements established by the State Board for Educator Certification as published in the TAC.
3. Any action deemed a violation of the [Code of Ethics](#) and [Standard Practices for Texas Educators](#), and/or;
4. Any action deemed a violation of OLLU's [Student Handbook](#) and [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and/or;
5. Any action deemed violating school district and/or campus policy during field experiences.

The program faculty and staff committee will decide whether a candidate should be dismissed from the program. Dismissal may occur at any time. Candidates dismissed from Our Lady of the Lake University will also be automatically dismissed from the Educator Preparation Program. Following Our Lady of the Lake University policies, all dismissal decisions can be appealed.

### ***Withdrawal from the Educator Preparation Program***

If any candidate decides to withdraw from the EPP, they must send an email to the OLLU Certification Officer. The email must contain the student's ID number and a statement explaining their decision to leave the program. Additionally, the candidate must schedule a meeting with the Certification Officer to sign internal documentation. If the candidate withdraws from the Department of Education, they will also be withdrawn from the Educator Preparation Program.

Current students and faculty have access to the university's internal documents. If you are an external constituent and need access to a document, please contact Monica Castillo, OLLU Certification Officer, at [mycastillo@ollusa.edu](mailto:mycastillo@ollusa.edu).

# OLLU EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM (EPP) & TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY (TEA) COMPLAINT PROCESS

## COMPLAINTS

In this policy, the terms “complaint” and “grievance” shall have the same meaning.

Stakeholder complaints shall be filed in accordance with this policy, except as required by the policies listed below. Some of these policies require appeals to be submitted in accordance with this complaint policy after the relevant complaint process:

1. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, gender, national origin, disability, or religion shall be submitted in accordance with POLICY.
2. Complaints concerning retaliation related to discrimination and harassment shall be submitted in accordance with POLICY.
3. Complaints concerning identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability within the scope of Section 504 shall be submitted in accordance with POLICY and the procedural safeguards handbook.
4. Complaints concerning identification, evaluation, educational placement, or discipline of a student with a disability within the scope of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act shall be submitted in accordance with POLICY, and the procedural safeguards handbook.

## NOTICE TO STAKEHOLDERS

The Program shall inform stakeholders of this policy by information posted in the physical facility, on the website, or, upon request, written information.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Our Lady of the Lake University EPP encourages stakeholders to discuss their concerns with the appropriate Program employee who has the authority to address the concerns. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible level.

### INFORMAL PROCESS

Informal resolution shall be encouraged but shall not extend any deadlines in this policy, except by mutual written consent.

## FORMAL PROCESS

A stakeholder may initiate the formal process described below by timely filing a written complaint form. Even after initiating the formal complaint process, stakeholders are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. A stakeholder whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time. The process described in this policy shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted by law or Pro-gram policy, nor to require a full evidentiary hearing or “mini-trial” at any level.

## FREEDOM FROM RETALIATION

Neither the Program nor any Program employee shall unlawfully retaliate against any stakeholder for bringing a concern or complaint.

## GENERAL PROVISIONS

### FILING

Complaint forms and appeal notices may be filed by hand-delivery, by electronic communication, including e-mail and fax, or by U.S. Mail. Hand-delivered filings shall be timely filed if received by the appropriate Program employee by the close of business on the deadline. Filings submitted by electronic communication shall be timely filed if they are received by the close of business on the deadline, as indicated by the date and time shown on the electronic communication. Mail filings shall be timely filed if they are post-marked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline and received by the appropriate Program employee no more than three days after the deadline.

## SCHEDULING CONFERENCES

The Program shall make reasonable attempts to schedule conferences at a mutually agreeable time. If a stakeholder fails to appear at a scheduled conference, the Program may hold the conference and issue a decision in the stakeholder's absence.

## **RESPONSE**

At Levels One and Two, "response" shall mean a written communication to the stakeholder from the appropriate Program employee. Responses may be hand-delivered, sent by electronic communication to the stakeholder's e-mail address of record, or sent by U.S. Mail to the stakeholder's mailing address of record. Mailed responses shall be timely if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline.

## **DAYS**

"Days" shall mean Program business days. In calculating timelines under this policy, the day a document is filed is "day zero." The following business day is "day one."

## **REPRESENTATIVE**

"Representative" shall mean any person who or organization that is designated by the stakeholder to represent the stakeholder in the complaint process.

The stakeholder may designate a representative through written notice to the Program at any level of this process. If the stakeholder designates a representative with fewer than three days' notice to the Program before a scheduled conference or hearing, the Program may reschedule the conference or hearing to a later date, if desired, in order to include the Program's counsel. The Program may be represented by counsel at any level of the process.

## **CONSOLIDATING COMPLAINTS**

Complaints arising out of an event or a series of related events shall be addressed in one complaint. A stakeholder shall not file separate or serial complaints arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous complaint.

## **UNTIMELY FILINGS**

All time limits shall be strictly followed unless modified by mutual written consent.

If a complaint form or appeal notice is not timely filed, the complaint may be dismissed, on written notice to the stakeholder, at any point during the complaint process. The stakeholder may appeal the dismissal by seeking review in writing within ten days from the date of the written dismissal notice, starting at the level at which the complaint was dismissed. Such appeal shall be limited to the issue of timeliness.

## **COSTS INCURRED**

Each party shall pay its own costs incurred in the course of the complaint.

## **COMPLAINT AND APPEAL FORMS**

Complaints and appeals under this policy shall be submitted in writing on a form provided by the Program.

Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the complaint form. If the stakeholder does not have copies of these documents, copies may be presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted by the support unless the stakeholder did not know the documents existed before the Level One conference.

A complaint or appeal form that is incomplete in any material aspect may be dismissed but may be refiled with all the required information if the refile is within the designated time for filing.

## **LEVEL ONE**

Complaint forms must be filed:

1. Within 15 days of the date the stakeholder first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance; and
2. With the lowest level Program employee who has the authority to remedy the alleged problem.

If the only Program employee who has authority to remedy the alleged problem is the Program legal authority or designee, the complaint may begin at Level Two following the procedure, including deadlines, for filing the complaint form at Level One.

If the complaint is not filed with the appropriate Program employee, the receiving Program employee must note the date and time the complaint form was received and immediately forward the complaint form to the appropriate Program employee.

The appropriate Program employee shall investigate as necessary and schedule a conference with the stakeholder within ten days after receipt of the written complaint. The Program employee may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

Absent extenuating circumstances, the Program employee shall provide the stakeholder a written response within ten days following the conference. In reaching a decision, the Program employee may consider information provided at the Level One conference and any other relevant documents or information the Program employee believes will help resolve the complaint.

## **LEVEL TWO**

If the stakeholder did not receive the relief requested at Level One or if the time for a response has expired, the stakeholder may request a conference with the Program legal authority or designee to appeal the Level One decision.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the Program, within ten days of the date of the written Level One response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the Level One response deadline.

After receiving notice of the appeal, the Level One Program employee shall prepare and forward a record of the Level One complaint to the Level Two Program legal authority or designee. The stakeholder may request a copy of the Level One record.

The Level One record shall include:

1. The original complaint form and any attachments.
2. All other documents submitted by the stakeholder at Level One.
3. The written response issued at Level One and any attachments.
4. All other documents relied upon by the Level One Program employee in reaching the Level One decision.

The Program legal authority or designee shall schedule a conference within ten days after the appeal notice is filed. The conference shall be limited to the issues and documents considered at Level One. At the conference, the stakeholder may provide information concerning any documents or information relied upon by the Program employee for the Level One decision. The Program legal authority or designee may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The Program legal authority or designee shall provide the stakeholder a written response within ten days following the conference. In reaching a decision, the Program legal authority or designee may consider the Level One record, information provided at the Level Two conference, and any other relevant documents or information the Program legal authority or designee believes will help resolve the complaint. Recordings of the Level One and Level Two conferences, if any, shall be maintained with the Level One and Level Two records.

If the complaint Program employee who has authority to remedy the alleged problem is the Program legal authority or designee, the complaint may begin at Level Two following the procedure, including deadlines, for filing the complaint form at Level One.

## **COMPLAINTS TO THE TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY**

If the stakeholder is not satisfied with the complaint process or outcome, the stakeholder may file a complaint against the Program with the Texas Education Agency. The official Texas Education Agency complaint process can be found at [http://tea.texas.gov/About\\_TEA/Contact\\_Us/Complaints/Complaints/](http://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/Contact_Us/Complaints/Complaints/). Information about the Complaints Against Educator Preparation Programs can be found at <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/preparation-and-continuing-education/complaints-against-educator-preparation-programs>.

The TEA complaint form can be found at <https://www.complaints.tea.texas.gov/en-US/>.



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